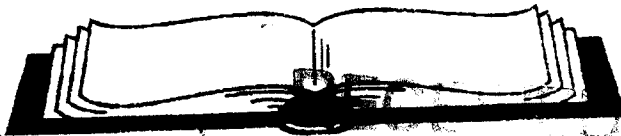


Code # 585
(for office use only)

NEW JERSEY

1999-2000

Guidelines and
Application



BEST ORIGINAL PRACTICES

DEC 6 1999
OFFICE OF
INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

Category	Public Engagement	(Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name	Visible Woman Club-Community Partnership for Gender Equity	
Number of Schools with Practices	1 (If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)	
County	Union	
District (Proper Name)	Cranford Public Schools	
District Address	street/p. o. box 132 Thomas St. city Cranford, NJ 07016 zip code	
District Telephone	908-272-9100 Fax 908-272-039 Email rennaema@cranfordsch-	
Chief School Administrator	Emalene Renna, Ed.E ools.org	
Not a Public School? (Proper Name)	Cranford High School	
School Address	street/p. o. box 201 West End Place city Cranford, NJ zip code 07016	
School Telephone	908-709-6272 Fax 908-276-6552 Email cardinel@cranfordsch-	
School Principal	Laura Cardine, Ed.D ools.org	
Program Developer(s)	Eileen Dachnowicz	
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	<i>Emalene Renna</i>	

Approved: ☒ Yes ☐ No County Superintendent's Signature

Frances [Signature]

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

585

**NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
1999-2000 APPLICATION**

Application Requirements:

- ◆ **RESPONSES** to the information and the statements below must be **ANONYMOUS**. No reference should be made to the names of the district or the school(s). Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements.
- ◆ **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM** on pages 1, 2 (if applicable) and 4 and **THE NUMBER OF LINES SPECIFIED FOR RESPONSES** to the statements. Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
- ◆ Application must be **keyboarded** on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, portrait format. Ten-point or larger computer font or twelve-pitch or larger typewriter font must be used. (This sentence is in ten-point.)
- ◆ **KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to the statements below must be **no more than a total of three pages**. Keyboard the statement followed by the response. Format your response to the number of lines specified.
- ◆ The information on page 4 and the keyboarded responses to statements must be printed or copied on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be printed or copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) and 4 and the keyboarded responses together.
- ◆ The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
- ◆ The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by November 22, 1999, with the Itemized List of District Applications form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.
- ◆ **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE PROCEDURES FOR SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION MAY RESULT IN THE ELIMINATION OF THE APPLICATION.**

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School	Grade Levels	Practice Name
<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School	_____	Visible Woman Club Community Partnership for gender equity
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School	_____	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High School	9-12	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	_____	
		Number of Schools with Practice 1
		Number of Districts with Practice 1

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Art (Visual and Performing Arts) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Education and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support/Giftedness <input type="checkbox"/> and Counseling Programs <input type="checkbox"/> (services contributing to high student achievement)	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts/Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Safety/Security <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement and Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment <input type="checkbox"/> School-to-Career/Workplace Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative, how it promotes high student achievement and how it can be replicated. (Maximum of 50 lines for response)
2. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses and how they were identified. List the *Core Curriculum including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards** addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses the standard(s). (Maximum of 50 lines for response)
3. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. (Maximum of 60 lines for response)

*The 1996 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>.
6apppb.20

1. *Describe the practice proposed for recognition and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative, how it promotes high student achievement, and how it can be replicated.*

The purpose of the Visible Woman Club is to develop self-esteem in females by shaping them to be contributing members of the community. Originally formed five years ago at the request of female high school students who felt their special needs were not addressed in curricular and co-curricular activities, the Club has grown tremendously. Not only have the members been successful in expounding the cause of female equality in school, the job and the marketplace, but also they have reached out to Women's Support Groups and have significantly contributed to their causes.

In essaying the objectives of the group, I would highlight these:

1. *To develop the leadership qualities of young women and enhance their self-esteem*
2. *To reach out to the community in support of a mutual cause – equality and fair treatment of women.*
3. *To encourage them to achieve success in activities that are considered traditionally male areas.*
4. *To help young women to shape their lives so that they continue their worthwhile contributions to society.*

In the first year of its operation, the Visible Woman Club consisted of twenty female students who met together biweekly in the morning to discuss the concerns of growing up female. Through discussions of such works as *Reviving Ophelia*, *School Girls* and *Failing at Fairness*, the students became aware of the ways in which adolescent females faced an identity crisis and loss of confidence. At this point they reached out to the community of women for mutual help. They held brunches to aid battered women to which they invited women of achievement as speakers; they began to attend lectures at support groups in the county.

When a representative for "Women for Women of ___ County" approached us to publicize their activities, the third objective came into play. The members decided to design and maintain their own Website; they created Web pages for the various support groups in our county; they reviewed books on feminist issues; they hailed outstanding women of our county, past and present.

The union of the Visible Woman with women's support groups has been a felicitous one. When Gloria Steinem came to address a group, they invited two from our group to speak to the audience about what we were doing for the feminist cause. The praise of Ms. Steinem and the outpouring of e-mail and personal praise for our efforts propelled the members to move ahead even more.

Each year the group holds a school-wide forum for Women's History month on a relevant feminist issue. Topics such as anorexia, bulimia, depression, school bias toward females have drawn record-breaking crowds of students who voluntarily attend after school. However, the females, buoyed by their computer success, aimed to encourage other females to develop their skills. Volunteering to serve as the jump start of the *Technofilles*, a group of young women who would develop skill in designing and maintaining Websites as a result of a grant, the Visible Woman Club invited three females who had been successful in mathematics and science to speak to the annual forum. One of the speakers donated her time to writing a monthly column *gratis*.

The formation of such a club could easily be replicated following these steps. Even if fostering gender equity is not the goal, the same practice could be used in forming groups that have real ties to the community.

2. *Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses and how they were identified. List the Core Curriculum Content and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses these standards.*

Four specific factors informed us of the need for such a practice:

- 1) Student interest – a group of interested females approached me to form such a club since their needs were not being addressed in either curricular or co-curricular activities.
- 2) An examination of current leadership roles in 1994: males dominated as presidents of leading school organizations, such as the National Honor Society and Student Government.
- 3) A disproportionate number of males to females in calculus, computer applications classes and AP science classes indicated that females were being overlooked in these fields.
- 4) The State Department of Education began to stress community involvement and service learning as important aspects of education.

The Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards as well as Core Curriculum Content Standards are being addressed in many of the projects of the group:

- 1) Designing a Web site and maintaining it; researching women-support groups, women's history and putting info on the Web.
CCS 1 ((1,3,5,7,8); 2 (1-10); 3 (1-15); 4 (1-11); 5 (5); LAL 3.1; 3.2; 3.4; 3.5; Math 4.1; 4.2; Science 5.3; Soc. Studies 6.2 (2,9,10,11)
- 2) Speaking at the annual forum and women's support groups. Students have to research information and develop speaking and listening skills.
CCS 1 (1,3,4,8); 2 (7,90; 3 (1-15); 4 (1-7; 9); LAL 3.1 ((1-9; 14-18); 3.2 (1,5,6, 10, 13); 3.4 (16); Science 5.3 (6,7); Soc. Studies 6.4 (10-14).
- 3) Reading feminist literature and discussion. Students read material for discussion meetings; they review it for Web site; they present its interpretation at annual forum.
LAL 3.1 (14,15,16,17,21,22); 3.2 (12, 13); 3.3 (15, 17, 18); 3.4 (19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 29); Soc. Studies 6.5 (13, 14, 17); 6.6 (11).
- 4) Planning brunches and charity events to help battered women.
CCS 1 (8, 12); 3 (1-4; 8-15); 4 (6).
- 5) Engaging the services of speakers to address the school audience.
LAL 3.2 (8-13); 3.3 (18); 3.5 (10).
- 6) Contributing to various support groups throughout the county by providing speakers, listing information on their services on Visible Woman Web site, and attending meetings.
CCS 1 (1,8); 2 (1-9); 3 (1-15); 4 (1-3); LAL 3.1(1-19; 21); 3.2 (1-6; 12, 13); 3.3 (15-18); 3.4 (18-20); 3.5 910, 15, 17)

We have found that we integrate many of the Cross-Content Standards and Core-Curriculum Standards successfully through this practice. The members hone important skills in listening, reading, writing, understanding social studies and using technology effectively. In addition, they receive a real life experience in contributing to society in a meaningful way. Also, since each of these community projects is followed up with a discussion, the students have an excellent opportunity to LEARN through service.

3. *Document the assessment methods used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met.*

1. *To develop the leadership qualities of young women and enhance their self esteem.*

The testimony of the club members, past and present, attests to the fulfillment of the objective. In the *Star-Ledger* Guide to New Jersey High Schools, October 31, 1999, members were interviewed for a feature article on "Pride and Purpose: Clubs give students what they want, including a sense of belonging." The article quotes the current club president who declared, "I came into high school being a little timid and shy, and I needed to become more extroverted. It has helped me tremendously. The student, who has now developed the resolve to major in chemical engineering in college, further asserted, "I've learned I can attempt to pursue anything." Of former members who regularly respond with the adviser, 80% have gone on to major or minor in women's studies or to try fields that have been traditionally male.

2. *To reach out to the community in support of a mutual cause – equality and the fair treatment of women.*

Many women's support groups have reached out to us for help; their testimonials on file attest to our mutual support.

"Women for Women in ____ County" requested our help in establishing a Web site. We placed information on their activities on our Web site. In turn, the women agreed to help us in our projected mentoring activities for middle school females.

"The Resource Center for Women" requested that two of our students speak at the Gloria Steinem Address. The students were praised for their actions and agreed to help other schools willing to initiate such a club. This year, the members are attending the programs presented by the center and relaying the information to the students.

"The Business and Professional Women of ____ County" invited two of our members to speak at their meeting stressing intergenerational ties.

3. *To encourage them to achieve success in activities that are traditionally male areas.*

Changes have been made in the school to achieve this objective, largely because of the actions of the Visible Woman Club.

1. Members sought to balance the unequal ratio of males to females in computer technology by enlisting the help of the Douglass College for Women in Math, Science and Engineering. When two math teachers received a Tensor Foundation grant for this purpose, the Visible Woman Club agreed to kick off the establishment of the *Technofilles*, a group of young women trained by female teachers to develop computer expertise in designing and maintaining Web sites and repairing computers. On March 24, 1999, The Visible Woman held a forum to attract females to join the club and/or attempt careers in mathematics and science by inviting three successful women in these fields to address the group. Twenty-five female students joined.
2. The school is initiating after-school programs specifically for females: workshops have been established for female students to create Web sites and to troubleshoot problems.
3. The number of female students in AP Calculus in the last two years has increased by 20%.

4. *To help young women shape their lives so that they can continue their worthwhile contributions to society.*

Only time can tell whether we have achieved this objective (Former member response appears to validate this objective, however). The recognition the Visible Woman has received so far should prove to a marker for continued work:

1. The Student Activities Committee of our high school has awarded the Visible Woman the distinction of being named the "Club of the Month" four times.
2. The Department of Education of the State of New Jersey awarded the Club a "PRIDE" AWARD last June for its work in promoting gender equity.
3. A description of the work of our club helped the school to gain semifinalist status in the state competition for service-learning. No wilting Ophelias, the Visible Woman members can well serve as role models for other young women.